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ABSTRACT

Tompkins Cortland Community College (TCCC) in Dryden, New York, opened the College Teaching Center (CTC) in 1988 to address the professional development needs of full- and part-time faculty. The CTC is an autonomous, faculty-directed, professional development program with its own budget and Board of Directors. Activities sponsored by the CTC are open to full- and part-time faculty and local K-12 educators. Each year, the CTC sponsors approximately 18 workshops on issues related to teaching and learning, 25 round table discussions, 6 to 10 software mini-courses, and 6 classroom research projects. In 1990, the CTC was awarded a grant to implement a professional development program for part-time faculty. The 3-year, $110,000 project extended the work of the CTC to include a Master Teacher Certification Program (MTCP), designed to improve teaching effectiveness of part-time faculty, increase their participation in professional development activities, and increase their self-confidence. Since spring 1992, 26 part-time faculty, representing 18% of the part-time population at TCCC, have completed the MTCP. MTCP requirements include faculty participation in 3 core seminars, 10 workshops, 2 sessions of computer instruction, and 1 semester of mentoring experience with a full-time faculty member or a part-timer who has completed the MTCP. Faculty completing the MTCP receive more rapid advancement to higher pay and eligibility to serve as a mentor. As part-time faculty take on larger more permanent roles in community college instruction, programs that strengthen faculty development and support the leadership role of division chairpersons may be a means to better integrate part-timers into the college community. (KP)

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PART-TIME FACULTY: HERE TODAY, NOT GONE TOMORROW

OR

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PART-TIME FACULTY AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF DIVISION CHAIRPERSONS

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Biography

Charles Bechtold is Division Head for Engineering Technology and Sciences at Tompkins Cortland Community College in Dryden, New York, a position he has held for seventeen years. Prior to that he was Associate Professor of Mechanical Technology at the same institution after having served five years in the aerospace and pollution-control industries as an engineer. Mr. Bechtold holds bachelor's and master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cornell University and is a licensed Professional Engineer. He has served on several instructional evaluation teams for the New York State Education Department and the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Patricia M. Yantz is a Professor of English at Tompkins Cortland Community College in Dryden, New York. She served as Coordinator of the College Teaching Center for three years and currently serves on its Board of Directors. From January to July 1993, Professor Yantz served as the Division Chairperson, pro tem, for Liberal Arts and Humanities, a division with 22 full-time faculty and approximately 70 part-time faculty.

Her classroom research of the effectiveness of the computer as a writing tool and her subsequent development of a bibliographic compiler has been presented at the League for Innovations Conference; the "Computers on Campus" Conference sponsored by the University of South Carolina; and the Community College Humanities Association.

Her more recent interest in professional development, the creation of a College Teaching Center, and the FIPSE Grant awarded to Tompkins Cortland Community College to fund its part-time faculty program has been reported on at the AACJC in Spring 1992 and at NCSPOD (National Council of Staff, Professional and Organizational Development) in the Fall 1993.

PART-TIME FACULTY
HERE TODAY--NOT GONE TOMORROW

Part-time/Adjunct faculty are a fact of life at virtually all colleges and universities, but particularly so at community colleges. For example in 1992-93 in the Middle States Region (NY, PA, DE, MD, NJ), 64.8% of faculty at community colleges were part-time. In addition, the individuals who teach part-time at our community colleges cannot be considered "casual labor." At Tompkins Cortland Community College (TCCC), nearly half (47%) of part-time/adjunct faculty have been at the institution for six or more semesters. We suspect that other institutions are experiencing the same kind of stability and commitment from their part-time faculty work force.

As our institutions rely more heavily on part-time teaching faculty and as that work force becomes less temporary and transient, our concerns must be with getting the most effective performance from our teaching professionals. At most institutions the Division Chairperson is the key player. But making optimum use of faculty resources has many dimensions. At Tompkins Cortland Community College we are trying to blend two very distinct elements: a faculty-directed College Teaching Center whose structure excludes Division Chairpersons or other administrators, and the traditional role of the Division Chairperson.

This presentation shares the design of the professional development program for part-time faculty at Tompkins Cortland Community College, and it discusses how the traditional role of the Division Chairperson is changing as a result.

THE FACULTY-DIRECTED COLLEGE TEACHING CENTER

In 1988 the College Teaching Center at TCCC opened. It is an autonomous, faculty-directed, professional development program which includes programs for full-time and part-time/adjunct faculty. The College Teaching Center has its own budget, and the funds allocated by the College to the Teaching Center are spent at the direction of the Center's Board of Directors. For the 1993-94 academic year, the College Teaching Center has an budget of $24,650 which includes the salaries for the Coordinator, Coordinator of Adjunct Services, and Clerk. Each of these positions is created and filled by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors is made up of seven full-time faculty members elected by the full-time faculty; one adjunct faculty member; the College's Development Officer; the Coordinator (ex-officio), a faculty member who is compensated for 7.5 hours/week with a three credit hour load reduction; the Coordinator of Adjunct Services (ex-officio), an adjunct faculty member who is paid for 10 hours/week; the Division Chairperson (ex-officio) of the Instructional and Learning Resources Division; and two external members.

The decision to create a faculty-directed and operated Teaching Center was consistent with the view that professional development had to be voluntary. The Academic Division Chairpersons were not included in the structure and operation of the College Teaching Center. As Division Chairpersons are responsible for performance evaluations of faculty, their taking an active part in the development and operation of the Teaching Center and its activities was seen as likely to inhibit faculty participation. The ex-officio role of the one Division Chairperson on the Board of Directors was incorporated to accommodate the College's structure rather than to allow for input from Division Chairpersons.

ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE TEACHING CENTER

Activities sponsored by the College Teaching Center are open to all members of the College and the community. The targeted population is full-time and adjunct faculty of the College and local K-12 educators. The Teaching Center sponsors approximately 18 workshops per year on issues directly related to teaching and learning. In addition approximately 25 Round Table Discussions are held which focus on issues that may be peripherally related to teaching and learning but which are specifically related to the College. The College Teaching Center annually presents six to ten minicourses on various software programs. The College Teaching Center sponsors up to six Classroom Research Projects awarded only to full-time and adjunct faculty.

There is also an Individualized Assessment Program which allows faculty to assess their teaching performances either with the help of a peer or on their own. In addition, teaching performances are videotaped at a faculty member's request.

THE MASTER TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR PART-TIME FACULTY

In 1990 the College Teaching Center and TCCC was awarded a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) to implement a professional development program for part-time faculty. The three-year, $110,000 project extended the work of the College Teaching Center to include the Master Teacher Certification Program which is designed to improve the teaching effectiveness of part-time faculty, increase their participation in professional development activity, and increase their self-confidence.

In the three semesters since Spring 1992, the first semester in which a part-time faculty member could have possibly completed the Program, 26 part-time faculty members have completed the Master Teacher Certification Program. This represents approximately 18% of the part-time population at the College. Roughly 40% of the full-time faculty engaged in the Mentoring Segment of the Master Teacher Certification Program with the part-time faculty members.

Participation in the Master Teacher Certification Program is voluntary. The program does not have to be completed within a pre-determined time frame, and participants may drop out of the program at any time. Currently all participating part time faculty members are required to attend:

Three Core Seminars: a "Nuts and Bolts" Orientation to the College and the College Teaching Center (in addition to the Orientation sponsored by the College); a seminar dedicated to the "Mission of the College"; a seminar dedicated to "Teaching the Adult Learner."

Ten workshops sponsored by the College Teaching Center.

Two sessions of computer instruction by the College's Instructional Software Specialist; or participation in one computer minicourse offered through the College Teaching Center.

One semester of the mentoring experience with either a full-time faculty member or a part-time faculty member who has completed the program. In addition to a minimum of five meetings to discuss various teaching-related concepts, the program requires either team-teaching or peer evaluations. A journal and a portfolio are required to complete the experience.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

The benefits for completing the Master Teacher Certification Program were designed to meet some of those needs already expressed by our part-time faculty. These included more rapid advancement to higher pay levels, greater recognition of part-time faculty as professionals, and a greater sense of community and collegiality with full-time counterparts.

The part-time salary scale has four steps; promotion to the next level is automatic after the completion of six semesters. A part-time faculty member can complete the Master Teaching Certification Program in two semesters. Upon completion of this program the part-time faculty member is promoted one step for the next semester in which he/she teaches.

In support of the professional development work of part-time faculty, the College has established the Trustees' Award in Teaching Excellence for Adjunct Faculty to parallel its longstanding Trustees' Award in Teaching Excellence for Full-time Faculty. The Trustees' Award for Excellence includes a $500 honorarium.

In addition, the part-time faculty member who has completed the program is eligible to serve as a mentor within the Master Teacher Certification Program for a $100 honorarium--the same honorarium awarded to full-time faculty who participate.

There are benefits to the participant that do not have any real dollar cost to the institution. Upon completion of the program the part-time faculty member has his/her name listed as the instructor in the Master Schedule. Also, the part-time faculty member is given preferential treatment whenever possible over "non-certified" part-time faculty candidates for positions available at the College for which he/she qualifies.

THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF THE DIVISION CHAIRPERSON IN PART-TIME FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The Division Chairpersons' role in the professional development of part-time faculty is limited by time and the scope of their other duties. At Tompkins Cortland Community College, Division Chairpersons independently interview and hire all part-time faculty for their divisions.

All first-time part-time faculty are observed twice each semester by Division Chairpersons or their designees. Thereafter, Chairpersons or their designees observe part-time faculty each semester.

Student evaluation forms (the same as those used for full-time faculty) are distributed twice each semester to students in all sections taught by first, second and third semester part-time faculty. Thereafter, student evaluation forms are distributed once each semester to students in all sections taught by part-time faculty.

Assistance for those part-time faculty who might want to develop curricula is available on an individual basis. Part-time faculty requests for financial support to attend a conference or participate in a seminar off campus are often refused on the grounds that budgets are tight and full-time faculty have priority.

Each semester the College holds an orientation session for both new and returning part-time faculty. Division Chairpersons meet with their respective part-time faculties for some 30 to 45 minutes during this orientation session.

THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE DIVISION CHAIRPERSON IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PART-TIME FACULTY

The role of the Division Chairperson in the professional development of part-time faculty has been affected indirectly through the Master Teacher Certification Program. Because of the benefits of the program and to maintain involvement of part-time faculty in professional development activities, both the faculty-directed College Teaching Center and the Division Chairpersons have an integrated role to play in the professional development of part-time faculty. In this way, the relationships between the faculty-directed College Teaching Center and the Division Chairpersons may be altered for a long time to come. This will be especially true as more part-time faculty complete the program.

HIRING

Tompkins Cortland Community College, like others, offers technical programs which require that faculty be on the cutting edge in their fields. Part-time faculty often meet this need best. However, the pay scale for faculty is not enough of an inducement; often it is a deterrent. In addition, professionals on the cutting edge in their fields may not be trained to teach and may be reluctant to take on this challenging role. At times, the challenge of effective teaching is underestimated by a professional from another field, and/or the teaching skills of the newly hired part-time may be overestimated by a Division Chairperson.

The Master Teacher Certification Program may be used by Division Chairpersons as an inducement for some individuals to teach on a part-time basis at the College. For some the promise of an increase of one step on the salary scale upon completion of the Program is attractive. Also, the College Teaching Center and the Master Teacher Certification Program offer an opportunity for part-time faculty to become involved in the College by developing their teaching effectiveness with other professionals on campus.

While the College Teaching Center and the Master Teacher Certification Program may help attract part-time faculty members, there is a danger that from this information, part-time faculty might infer that a long-term commitment is implied as a result of the efforts made to improve the quality of part-time faculty teaching. Division Chairpersons may have to consider this as they conduct interviews in hiring part-time faculty members. Completion of the Master Teacher Certification does not guarantee rehiring, and all part-time faculty must be told this.

EVALUATING AND REHIRING

One benefit to the participant in the Master Teacher Certification Program is preferential treatment for positions for which the part-time faculty member is qualified, thus suggesting that the College is interested in long-term relationships with its part-time faculty. While there is no guaranteed rehiring of part-time faculty who complete the program, an expectation may be created. There may be an increased moral obligation for the College to retain the part-time faculty member who has "successfully" completed a program that "certifies" him/her as a "master teacher."

As part-time faculty continue to complete the Master Teacher Certification Program, the practices used by Division Chairpersons to evaluate part-time faculty may have to be reconsidered. The observations performed by Division Chairpersons and the student evaluations done in two semesters may not provide the administrative confirmation of the part-time faculty member's being a "Master Teacher." Altering the existing evaluation forms to gather more specific information about teaching performance and course structure may be useful, and additional discussions between part-time faculty and the Division Chairpersons about the results may be necessary.

The mentoring component of the Master Teacher Certification Program is a semester-long commitment to peer evaluation and to self-evaluation by the part-time faculty participant. Should this resource be used in making decisions about rehiring part-time faculty members? Should Division Chairpersons consult with mentors about the teaching skills of part-time faculty? Should the Division Chairpersons continue to "ignore" the fact that some part-time faculty members are enrolled in the Master Teacher Certification Program?

While the issues of faculty-evaluating-faculty and the rights of management to hire and fire are ever-present in the union-conscious environment, the question of part-time faculty members' choosing to reveal aspects of their self-evaluation should be reconsidered.

MENTORING

One area of the Master Teacher Certification Program that may benefit greatly from integration of the College Teaching Center and the Division Chairpersons is the assignment of the mentoring pairs. The Coordinator for Part-time Services of the College Teaching Center considers all part-time faculty requests when making the mentoring assignments. This consideration, if extended to the Division Chairpersons, may result in an added professional development benefit for full-time faculty mentors: namely, the benefit from guiding a part-time faculty member through a self-evaluation process or engaging in a peer-evaluation process.

In addition, Division Chairpersons may have insights into content-area expertise that faculty in their divisions may be able to share. Recommending full-time faculty whom part-time faculty could use as resource persons is a practice that Division Chairpersons engaged in prior to the existence of the College Teaching Center. This experience should continue to be considered.

COMMUNICATING

Almost all communication between the Division Chairperson and the part-time faculty members is done on an individual basis. The Coordinator of Part-time Services for the College Teaching Center writes and distributes a monthly newsletter to all part-time faculty. Collaboration in using this newsletter makes good sense: it will facilitate both the College Teaching Center and the Division Chairpersons, and part-time faculty will benefit from knowing that there's a central vehicle for communicating information.

Division Chairpersons may consider expanding the level on which they communicate with part-time faculty members. Communication designed to involve adjunct faculty in the division is important. Inviting part-time faculty to workshops and seminars, considering part-time faculty schedules when arranging division social events, acknowledging the successes of part-time faculty at the division meetings, and involving willing part-time faculty members on task forces and committees are all ways that the Division Chairperson can work with the faculty-directed College Teaching Center to achieve goals that are mutually beneficial.

When the part-time faculty member has completed the Master Teacher Certification Program, professional development has not ended. Maintaining the involvement that the part-time faculty member exhibits and feels as a result of being in the Master Teacher Certification Program must be continued. A cooperative effort of the Division Chairpersons and the College Teaching Center may help to ensure that it happens.

CONCLUSIONS

In empowering the faculty to direct and operate its College Teaching Center, Tompkins Cortland Community College has chosen a path somewhat different than the ones already established at other institutions. The initial effect of allowing faculty to set the direction of their own professional development, particularly in the case of part-time faculty, was to move the focus of responsibility and initiative from the Division Chairpersons to the College Teaching Center. Now that the College Teaching Center has matured, however, an integrated approach that combines the resources of the College Teaching Center and the Administrative responsibility of Division Chairpersons is evolving.

As part-time faculty take on a larger, more permanent role in community college instruction, mechanisms for integrating them into our college communities must be developed. College-wide programs that strengthen faculty development and support the leadership role of the Division Chairperson, while impacting minimally on the budget may be a means to achieve the goal.